

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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## OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT

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## AREA ANNUAL MEETING

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WEDNESDAY,  
MARCH 26, 1997

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

## PRESENTERS:

DR. MARSHALL SMITH, Chairman  
Acting Deputy Secretary,  
US Department of EducationDR. GARY PHILLIPS,  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement,  
US Department of Education

This transcript was prepared from audiocassette tapes  
provided by the Department of Education.

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## P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

CHAIRMAN SMITH: I want to give you as much time as possible for questions. Somebody told me there might be a few. My name is Mike Smith. I'm the Acting Deputy Secretary at the Department of Education. I have with me Gary Phillips, who is heading up this overall effort. Many of you know Gary in other roles, particularly his role with the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

I want to let you know right off the bat that the session is being taped. It will be transcribed, and it will be put up on the 'net. You'll have an address. And so as you ask your question, we ask you to identify yourself and speak into the mike with the question. And whatever you say will be on the World Wide Web. So you need to at least know that. It's truth in advertising.

The address for that if you want to look up yourself -- and I mention this for two reasons. One is that reason. The biggest reason, however, is that there are a number of other meetings where the transcription of the verbatim discussion is on the Web, a number of other meetings about the national tests. We've had at least three other open meetings. And there's extensive stuff already out there and available to everybody.

The address out there is [www.ed.gov/nationaltests](http://www.ed.gov/nationaltests). The "national tests" is all in

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1 lower case. So you can get a lot of information. We do this  
2 for two reasons. One is to get the information out there to  
3 everybody, and the other is to make sure that the competition  
4 for the development of these tests is absolutely as fair as it  
5 possibly can be.

6 We may inadvertently give you information, in  
7 fact, that could be helpful to somebody competing for this.  
8 We may not even know we're giving you that, but in order to  
9 protect ourselves and make it as fair as possible, we put all  
10 that information out on the Web so anybody can read it.

11 Okay. I will talk for a few minutes about  
12 context and background and some of the policy issues. Gary  
13 will then make a short presentation on some of the  
14 specifications and the time line and how we're thinking about  
15 the nature of the development of the tests. We'll try to do  
16 all of that in 20 or 25 minutes and then open up the questions  
17 for the next hour.

18 This procedure has worked pretty well in the  
19 past, in the other times that we've had open meetings of these  
20 discussions. So if you could hold your questions until we're  
21 done? I think we may answer some of the questions on the way  
22 through our material and thereby let you focus on questions  
23 that we haven't answered or haven't addressed in sufficient  
24 detail for you.

25 Okay. There's a political context obviously and

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1 a general national context. Part of the context arose shortly  
2 after the election. The President, having focused on  
3 education during the election, during the campaign, and gotten  
4 a very positive response from the nation and on the basis of  
5 obviously his prior life as a governor, where he focused on  
6 education, both as the governor of Arkansas and as the head of  
7 the National Governors' Association, he decided that he really  
8 wanted to make education one of the key priorities in the  
9 second term.

10 And, as you all know, when you look at polls of  
11 the top issues in the campaign, education kind of bubbled up  
12 to the top over a period of about from April through November,  
13 the first time I've ever seen it in 30 years looking at these  
14 things. And it stayed there.

15 And it stayed there in significant part because  
16 the President has pushed it, because there is a sense I think  
17 in the nation that it is absolutely critical to the nation's  
18 health, because we're in a time when we don't have a foreign  
19 power that's threatening us in any particular way, in any  
20 really kind of catastrophic way.

21 And I think the public believes that it's now  
22 time to turn to some of the internal issues that affect it to  
23 try to improve the educational system in significant part,  
24 also to try to address some of the inequalities that exist in  
25 the society.

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1 I think what you'll see over the next year or so  
2 is the President, what I know you'll see over the next four  
3 years or so is the President, talking about education and  
4 these issues.

5 But I also think you're going to see kind of an  
6 emerging sense by the public about the importance of the  
7 issues and the importance of addressing them in a sustained  
8 way, in a way that doesn't jump or drift from topic to topic  
9 to topic but that focuses on a few topics that make sense to  
10 the public, make sense to the teachers, make sense to the  
11 parents and so on, and give us a real chance to change some of  
12 the odds in our system to improve the schools that need the  
13 improvement the most, and overall to raise the general level  
14 of standards.

15 The standards movement, as you know, has been  
16 percolating around for six or seven years. And by some  
17 measures, it has been fairly successful. Many states have  
18 standards now. I think 48 states, 48 of the 50 states, have  
19 standards.

20 Many of the states are beginning to put together  
21 assessments that actually are aligned with those, aligned with  
22 those standards. There's a general sense I think in the  
23 nation that alignment of assessments with the standards is an  
24 important part of really putting together a focused effort on  
25 the improvement of education.

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1 And it's not just alignment of standards. It's  
2 alignment of assessments. It, more importantly, is alignment  
3 of professional development and pre-service training and  
4 assessment and curriculum and so on.

5 Among a number of us who look at this and among  
6 people who are on the outside who look at this, -- many of  
7 you, some of you, are involved in that -- there's a sense that  
8 the standards movement, while it's moved in one way in  
9 extraordinary distance in the last seven years, has reached  
10 kind of a plateau. There are two measures to that that I  
11 rather like. They're kind of shorthand measures.

12 One is it's very clear that implementation of  
13 any reform of this sort at the state or district level is a  
14 heck of a lot harder than imagining it and passing a law and  
15 so on and changing the way that people behave and do things in  
16 bureaucracies, changing the way that they deal with the kinds  
17 of policy decisions and allocate resources is a heck of a lot  
18 more difficult than putting together different people to try  
19 to figure out standards, even history standards or science  
20 standards, which are controversial, as you all know.

21 So we're kind of at a plateau in terms of  
22 implementation. We're also at a point where at least we have  
23 concerns that many of the standards states are adopting are  
24 lower than we'd like.

25 And some of you know about the SREB's study,

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1 Mark Musick's work, where he compared the levels of  
2 proficiency in the national assessment of educational progress  
3 with the level of proficiency in a variety of state tests.

4 And he found, even in states like Wisconsin,  
5 which one thing was really a good government state, a state  
6 where education is pretty good and where standards can be  
7 pretty rigorous, that the difference between the percentage of  
8 kids who reach a proficiency level in NAEP and the percentage  
9 of kids who reach a proficiency level in their standards is  
10 dramatically different. As different as 70 to 75 percent  
11 reach that level in Wisconsin on the Wisconsin tests, and 14  
12 to 17 percent or so reach that level on the NAEP test. I  
13 haven't got the numbers exactly right, but I do have the  
14 ratio, in effect, the distance between those two percentages,  
15 about right. So a big difference between the nature of the  
16 performance standards, the challenging nature of those  
17 performance standards, when you compare state assessments with  
18 the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

19 Now, I know, you all know there are all sorts of  
20 controversy about setting the performance standards on the  
21 national assessment. I actually was on the BOBS, on the  
22 Glaziers, and Lynn's panel for a couple of years before I went  
23 into the government and debated with them the sets of issues.

24 The point is not so much the statistical  
25 accuracy or precision of those standards in my view. The

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1 point is that one can begin to look at those standards and  
2 think about a general level that people should begin to aspire  
3 to.

4 An example here is in reading, a basic level in  
5 national assessment in educational progress, which we can  
6 begin to exemplify with a set of different questions and ways  
7 of describing that are more than just using questions. We can  
8 begin to describe them in terms of the nature of books that  
9 kids can read and so on. That basic level begins to mean to  
10 us the level that students should read to, at least by the end  
11 of third grade or into fourth grade.

12 They should be able to read independently. We  
13 have been using reading independently and achieving to the  
14 basic level on the NAEP. And we have been using them to mean  
15 the same thing, in effect.

16 So the idea here is not so much to have  
17 statistical precision and not have any debate over the  
18 performance standards in that regard. The idea is to set  
19 performance standards at a level which have a meaning to them,  
20 which we believe and know that people can begin to aspire to  
21 and which for right now in our society a significant number of  
22 kids do not reach.

23 And, again, as many of you know, about 40  
24 percent of our students do not reach the basic level of  
25 reading in fourth grade. And those students are in our inner

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1 cities, and those students are our LAP students and those  
2 students are our students who go into disability classes in  
3 large part. About 23-24 percent of them are those kinds of  
4 students, students that aren't getting the kinds of  
5 interventions, that aren't getting the kinds of training and  
6 education that we all believe that they should be getting.

7 So we were concerned about the level of  
8 standards. And we were concerned about the implementation,  
9 and we were generally concerned about a lack of understanding  
10 of what we meant by standards. And we have been out there  
11 talking about standards for four years now and talking about  
12 challenging standards and so on.

13 About ten percent of an audience, the general  
14 audience, understands what you're talking about when you say  
15 that. At least they did about four years ago. And now it's  
16 perhaps up to 30 or 40 percent. But for the rest of them,  
17 however, their eyes glaze over.

18 It turns out that almost unconsciously our  
19 rhetoric began to change, to move from challenging standards  
20 to talking about student work in areas that really meant  
21 something to the parents and to the people out there. We  
22 started talking about the basics and acquiring the basics to a  
23 level where they were automatic, where they unconsciously did  
24 things very well, where they learned to read independently,  
25 for example.

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1 And so learning to read independently took on  
2 the characteristic of a concrete manifestations of basics.

3 And one can imagine lots of other concrete manifestations of  
4 basics and of standards themselves.

5 I mean, how does one begin to talk about  
6 standards? Well, one really talks about standards by using  
7 student work, by showing the kind of work that you expect  
8 students to be able to achieve to.

9 Okay. So we worried about these things. And we  
10 did get in a conversation about them. That conversation was  
11 in the context of two other things. It was in the context of  
12 a lot of effort the Department had made over the last three or  
13 four years in something called the parents' initiative, where  
14 we pulled together people from 3,000 different groups out  
15 there, 3,000 different organizations ranging from the AARP to  
16 Pizza Hut to the Urban League and a variety of others to form  
17 a set of organizations that all signed a compact to work with  
18 parents to have parents improve the educational opportunities  
19 for their kids. And one of the obvious things in there is to  
20 ask parents all to read to their young children and even to  
21 some of their older children.

22 Springing out of that group was something called  
23 "Read Right Now," which was a group of 60 or 70 organization  
24 which focused directly on the reading effort, not just on  
25 asking parents to do the reading but on ways of setting up

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1 tutoring organizations and a variety of other things; and,  
2 finally, the "America Reads" effort, which the President  
3 announced during the campaign, which did, in fact, set the  
4 concrete goal of every child achieving to a basic level by the  
5 end of the third grade.

6 The second factor which was out there during the  
7 time of our discussion was the announcement of the third  
8 international math and science results, study results, which  
9 is the big international study, which was in the eighth grade.

10 It was announced for both math and science.

11 U.S., as many of you know, came in below the  
12 median country in mathematics and slightly above the median  
13 country in science. More importantly, what that study pointed  
14 out was that there were some reasons for this placement of the  
15 U.S.

16 It wasn't just the fact that our kids are more  
17 diverse than kids in other countries. It came back to some of  
18 the core things that go on in education, some of the core  
19 things that go on in classrooms.

20 Our kids got a different body of content during  
21 the grades K-8 than kids in other countries. And our kids  
22 were taught differently than kids in other countries.

23 So the TIMMS assessment together with the TIMMS  
24 findings began to shape the thinking that the President had  
25 and that we had about the kinds of interventions that we want

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1 to carry out.

2 The fact that we had; that is, that people who  
3 had been in this field had, known, the kinds of things that  
4 the TIMMS study pointed out, that had known over the last 20  
5 years, as many of you have known, that the teaching of  
6 mathematics in K-8 in the United States is atrocious, had  
7 known that we don't get the same content that other countries  
8 get, had known that we don't motivate the teachers or motivate  
9 the students in many of the ways that good practice would  
10 suggest we should be motivating them. We had known that.

11 On the other hand, what happened when TIMMS came  
12 out there was that it captured the nation's attention, at  
13 least for a moment. And it pointed these things out, these  
14 things about the core of education being different in the U.S.  
15 than it is in other countries.

16 And it motivated a whole series of television  
17 programs and lots and lots of press about the differences  
18 between the teaching that could happen and the teaching that  
19 did happen in our country and the content that could happen  
20 and the content that did happen.

21 That was a very important signal to us because  
22 it said to us: Look, the country is going to listen to this.

23 If they've got some evidence that's also tied up to something  
24 having to do with an assessment, that if you go back and have  
25 evidence about how kids do, at the same time you have some

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1 evidence about kids might do better. And that begins to grab  
2 people. People begin to understand it.

3 So as we thought about this, we had two or three  
4 different goals. We wanted to reinvigorate the standards  
5 movement, get it off the plateau. We wanted to make standards  
6 real. And we wanted to addressing reading and mathematics in  
7 the context of making them real, making their standards real,  
8 and moving the odds for an awful lot of kids who don't achieve  
9 particularly well in those fields right now.

10 Then we thought about options. We were going to  
11 have a White House conference on this. Well, you know, how  
12 long does a White House conference last in the public minds?

13 We thought about going out and getting a lot of  
14 states and districts to take TIMMS and then playing up that  
15 each time they took it and the results were announced.  
16 There's going to be a little bit of that going on. Al Beaton  
17 is going to be doing some of that in a number of states and  
18 districts around the country.

19 There have been already some states and  
20 districts that have done this. There were some results  
21 announced for Minnesota a couple of weeks ago. And some group  
22 of districts in Illinois also did it. It turns out that  
23 Minnesota does pretty darn well in science, not very well in  
24 mathematics. In fact, it doesn't do much better than the U.S.  
25 does as a whole in mathematics.

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1                   And here's a state that again is a good  
2 education state, a lot of homogeneity in the state. There's  
3 been a lot of focus on education over the years. And it comes  
4 out not doing particularly well in math. And in significant  
5 part, it doesn't do particularly well because its curriculum  
6 isn't very challenging and its teaching isn't very good. But  
7 it often begins to come back to the same kinds of elements.

8                   What we ended up settling on after quite a lot  
9 of debate and thinking about how we were going to address  
10 those goals was what was seen by some of us as a fairly  
11 radical strategy, by others of us as only going part of the  
12 distance toward where at least they wanted us to go to. And  
13 it was to focus on the two basics, math and reading, and to  
14 focus on them at only one period of time, one for each of the  
15 two tests: fourth grade at reading and eighth grade at math.

16                  Why do you pick fourth grade at reading and  
17 eighth grade at math? Well, because in reading, fourth grade  
18 is the transition point. In American schools, people stop  
19 teaching reading. They stop teaching reading around fourth  
20 grade, and they expect kids to read for understanding, to be  
21 able to read the material and understand it and learn science  
22 and social studies and literature and so on.

23                  So fourth grade, reading becomes one of those  
24 stopping points, the end points in a process of education in  
25 the country that is absolutely critical to the future success

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1 of those kids.

2 Eighth grade in math is somewhat the same. You  
3 know, if you haven't captured, if you haven't gotten some  
4 pretty challenging math and begun to understand it by the end  
5 of eighth grade, you're going to end up not in the  
6 college-bound track in high school.

7 And if you end up not in the college-bound track  
8 in mathematics in small high schools, at least, you're often  
9 not in the college-bound track in any of the courses because  
10 the interrelationships among the courses is so tight.

11 Now, the critical thing here is that, as I've  
12 said before, we've had evidence over the years that we can,  
13 kids can, all over this country achieve the far higher levels  
14 in math in eighth grade than they presently have.

15 We knew through the second international math  
16 and science study, for example, that students in one part of  
17 the country or in one community in the country took algebra  
18 and students in another part of the country, who had exactly  
19 the same pretest scores as those kids did, weren't given the  
20 opportunity to take algebra.

21 The kids who took it in the first community did  
22 well in algebra. And the kids in the second community took  
23 the same old mathematics that they had been taking in fourth,  
24 fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth in sixth and seventh grades.

25 They took it in eighth grade. And they didn't gain very much

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1 at all. So we've got quite a lot of evidence that these kids  
2 can achieve more if we give them more opportunity to do it.

3 The idea here, then, was to use a fourth grade  
4 reading test and an eighth grade math test to try to motivate  
5 changes in this country in reading and math. We chose the  
6 National Assessment of Educational Progress content standards  
7 as the standards against which we'd build the test in  
8 significant part because already 43 states had adopted that  
9 test in its individual state assessments as its thermometer.

10 We chose 1999 as our goal for having the first  
11 set of tests out there for universal application because we  
12 thought we could make it because we are leap-frogging some of  
13 the difficulty, some of the difficult spots in developing  
14 tests, the development of the content standards, the  
15 development of performance levels. And we thought we could  
16 through that process get those tests out and on the street in  
17 a reasonable fashion by 1999.

18 Okay. Gary is going to go in a lot of detail,  
19 at least some detail, on the overall construction of the test.

20 That's the background. Let me focus for just a moment on the  
21 really central purpose here.

22 The purpose is not to give a test, not to give a  
23 test. The purpose is to motivate changes and opportunities  
24 for children all over this country, to learn to read well by  
25 the end of third grade and into fourth grade, and to learn to

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1 achieve to fairly challenging standards in mathematics by the  
2 end of eighth grade. That's the purpose.

3 To accomplish that purpose, we're not just going  
4 to give the test. In fact, the test becomes kind of a  
5 secondary item. The test is a lever to get there. It's a  
6 stimulus. It's something to capture people's attention just  
7 like it's capturing your attention.

8 What is important is that we put out there a  
9 full court press which mobilizes people all over this country  
10 to try to help the kids get to that point by 1999, by the year  
11 2000, by the year 2001, by the year 2002.

12 That involves a whole bundle of things. It  
13 involves changing the way that we do Title I, for example. It  
14 involves putting out a lot more research data about effective  
15 practices for Title I in reading and in mathematics.

16 It involves giving people impetus in knowledge  
17 and understanding about how to use things like "Achieve for  
18 All" or reading recovery if kids begin to get in trouble in  
19 reading early on in their careers.

20 It involves putting out lots and lots of good  
21 information about what are effective practices in mathematics  
22 instruction from K-8. It involves going to every school board  
23 member in this country with information, with information  
24 about the kinds of things that we expect kids to be able to  
25 achieve through the kinds of books that they're expected to

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1 read at different grade levels, the kinds of mathematics  
2 problems that they would be expected to achieve to, and ask  
3 those school board members to ask the superintendents whether  
4 or not their kids in this district can achieve to those  
5 levels; are achieving to those levels; and if not, why not.

6 It involves trying to find a set of levers and  
7 strategies that will begin to change the system. It involves  
8 trying to change the higher ed system, the teacher training  
9 system.

10 I mean, we all know the tragedy out there when  
11 you're training K-8 teachers. They take a three-credit course  
12 in mathematics. Maybe it's two or three credit courses in  
13 most states in this country.

14 Those courses are run often by the mathematics  
15 department. The mathematics department has no idea what  
16 really goes on in K-8 mathematics. It doesn't train the  
17 teachers to be competent to teach K-8 mathematics, not one  
18 wit.

19 It may train them in some remedial algebra. It  
20 may give them a little bit of geometry. It may give them a  
21 little bit of calculus. Well, they're not going to end up  
22 teaching calculus. They're going to end up teaching perhaps a  
23 lot of algebra. They're going to have to understand a lot  
24 about number systems and fractions and decimals. They're  
25 going to have to understand strategies for teaching those

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1 things. But almost none of that is taught in those courses,  
2 almost none of it.

3 And certainly it's not modeled. It's not  
4 modeled. It's often taught just like I'm talking standing up  
5 here. It's a talking head. It's not with kids thinking about  
6 strategies in situations. It's not looking at videotapes,  
7 Steigler's or anybody else's videotapes. It is the most dull,  
8 deadly, and useful kind of instruction that you can possibly  
9 get. And that's what we do over and over and over.

10 We have two million new teachers that we're  
11 going to need to hire over the next ten years. We have a  
12 tremendous window of opportunity at this point. But we've got  
13 to do something about it. And we haven't done anything about  
14 it in lots of areas, in those areas that I've just talked  
15 about, for the last 30 years. And we've known that those  
16 changes would make terrific differences in classrooms all over  
17 the country.

18 So what's going to happen over the next two  
19 years is we're going to be talking about this. We're going to  
20 be trying to leverage this. We're going to be putting out  
21 money on it. We're going to be calling on you incessantly for  
22 ideas and for document about evidence.

23 I spent an hour with the ARA Council two days  
24 ago. They want to help as a collective somehow. They're not  
25 exactly sure what they mean because obviously the ARA has got

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1 16,000 members. There are all sorts of different views. But  
2 they want to get in there and help.

3 They want to give us research-based evidence  
4 about what kinds of programs and strategies and other things  
5 work. And we want to get it from them. And we want to get it  
6 from the IRA. And we want to get it from the NCTM and anybody  
7 else that can come up and document in a really clear fashion.

8 So that's the challenge over the next two years,  
9 to really put together and mobilize a tremendous effort in  
10 both reading and mathematics and then extend that effort over  
11 the years in such a way that we get these kids to the point  
12 where they've got a lot more opportunity than they've had in  
13 the past.

14 Let me stop there. Gary, why don't you give us  
15 some detail?

16 DR. PHILLIPS: What I'd like to do is to give  
17 you some basic facts about the plans for the national tests  
18 and describe to you what the process is that we're going  
19 through and what the goals are or the time lines are, that  
20 sort of thing. I think after you hear this, you will have a  
21 better understanding of how this is the same or different from  
22 other testing programs and that sort of thing.

23 Let me start with some of the prior decisions  
24 that we are treating as given. Number one, the test will  
25 provide an annual indication of overall student efficiency in

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1 reading at grade four and math at grade eight and that this  
2 will be reported to parents and teachers.

3 Now, what's important to note here is that it's  
4 annual and that it's an indication. And it's overall math and  
5 reading. We are not committing ourselves to providing subtest  
6 information or the more detailed diagnostic information that  
7 you would get from, say, a NORM reference test or a state or a  
8 district test. So it's an overall indication of proficiency.

9 The reading will be in English. And both the  
10 reading and the math will provide national standards from  
11 NAEP. And the math will also provide international standards  
12 from TIMMS.

13 Items will be released to the public every year.

14 And the first administration of the test will be in 1999. So  
15 these are the things that we are starting with, which are the  
16 givens. And other things get built around these givens.

17 What's the basic design of the test? Number  
18 one, the test will be voluntary. What we mean by that is the  
19 federal government will not be involved in requiring this test  
20 of anyone.

21 Now, it is true that a state or a district might  
22 make the decision to make it mandatory. That will be a  
23 decision that will be made by the state or the district. It  
24 would not be a decision that is made by the government, the  
25 federal government.

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1           There will be no individually identifiable data  
2 from the test administration given back to the federal  
3 government. So if you are a school district or a state, you  
4 administer the test, the information that's collected by you  
5 is used by you. It does not come back to the federal  
6 government.

7           So this is not a data collection activity on our  
8 part. Instead, it's a product, a service that we are creating  
9 or developing and standing behind, but the use is really  
10 yours.

11           If we get information about your test  
12 administration, we would get it the same way that anyone else  
13 would get it. We would get a copy of your report. So we will  
14 not be collecting data in data files, this sort of thing.  
15 There will be no data sent back to us.

16           Now, it is the case that there would be as part  
17 of the development work for the national test, there would be  
18 a sample of students that would be drawn in a scientific way.

19           And we would use that for the equating, the calibrating, and  
20 linking and that sort of thing. So in that sense, we will be  
21 collecting data. But that's the only sense in which we will  
22 be collecting data as part of the development of the test.

23           The test will be consistent with the standards  
24 for APA, NC&E, ARA, the joint technical standards. I know  
25 those are being revised. And it turns out that those

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standards will be available about the time this test hits the street. We will be working with that group. And we will make sure that what we do is consistent with those standards.

We have inclusion criteria. We plan to have inclusion criteria and appropriate accommodations. These will have to be worked out as part of the development process. There will be a set of guidelines and this sort of thing that will be available.

Some examples of appropriate accommodations might be, for example, Braille and large print. Since the reading is in English, there would not be like, let's say, a Spanish version, but there might be a Spanish version of the math test. And there may be other accommodations as well. There would also be inclusion criteria that would be followed.

We plan to develop -- as I said, it's an individual test. This is not like NAEP or the TIMMS study, which is a survey. And the intent there is to get a good estimate of the overall distribution of performance in a population. This is an actual test like the test that states and districts and test publishers use. The idea here is to hone in on an estimate for individual students.

We will be developing parallel forms from year to year. So that means that whenever we administer the test in 1999, there will be available parallel forms for future use in future years so that we can monitor or you can monitor

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1 change over time in your school system.

2 We intend to report in a metric that's easily  
3 understood by parents and teachers. So, although we might use  
4 scale scores, for example, in the background, what gets  
5 reported out to the public will be something that's easily  
6 understood, probably a 0 to 100 scale, something like that.  
7 And this is one of the things we have to work on as we proceed  
8 with the development. We are committed to reporting this in a  
9 way with numbers that parents and teachers can easily  
10 understand.

11 The NAEP framework will be used as a guiding  
12 principle in the test development. So we're assuming that the  
13 NAEP framework in reading and math will be the target that we  
14 are using for the content of the test.

15 However, we will be using a different set of  
16 test specifications. As you know, NAEP has, for example, many  
17 more performance items than we will have on this test. So one  
18 of the things we have to do is alter the test specifications  
19 in such a way that we are able to take the NAEP framework and  
20 tailor it to a more individual testing environment than a  
21 group testing environment.

22 We also want to be able to link this test  
23 through NAEP and will do that through statistical linking. In  
24 fact, I think you're going to find a lot more of linking  
25 research that will have to be conducted as an early way of

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1 solving some of the issues that surround this national test.

2 We're going to be linking it to NAEP. And that  
3 is the way we'll get the performance standards on NAEP so that  
4 a student will get both the score on the test, let's say, a 70  
5 percent. They will also get an estimated score on NAEP. And  
6 along with that estimated score on NAEP will be the  
7 performance standard: basic, proficient, advanced.

8 We'll do something similar to TIMMS. For the  
9 math test at Grade 8, you will get a score on the math test.  
10 You will also get an estimated score on the TIMMS test. This  
11 linking will be done as a separate contract, and it will be  
12 done annually. So the link will always be fresh and current  
13 and up-to-date.

14 We plan to have up to 90 minutes of testing  
15 time. Now, I want to let you know that when we say 90 minutes  
16 of testing time and a few other things here, these are  
17 approximate times. I mean, these are not absolutely cast in  
18 stone. And as the test is developed and as the advisory  
19 groups get on board and as more discussion occurs, these will  
20 be modified.

21 This is a target where we are right now for  
22 budgeting and planning purposes. So we'll see how this turns  
23 out. But it's going to be probably in the vicinity of 90  
24 minutes. This is about twice the testing time that NAEP has  
25 in terms of the achievement test. So it's almost twice the

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1 amount of time. And this is what will help us hone in on.

2 As a result of testing more time, more items,  
3 and focusing more on multiple choice items, we'll be able to  
4 reduce that error that NAEP has down to a place where it's  
5 tolerable and acceptable and meets the standards for reporting  
6 individual students.

7 Approximately 80 percent of the test will be  
8 multiple choice. Twenty percent would be constructive  
9 response. And one of those responses would be, one of those  
10 constructive responses would be, an extended constructive  
11 response. Again, these are approximate targets at the moment.

12 And this is one of the things that will make this test  
13 different from NAEP in that there are different levels of  
14 constructive response in these two tests.

15 There will be an ongoing research component to  
16 this assessment, this testing program. And there will be  
17 annual funding to conduct research to solve problems as the  
18 problems come up.

19 For example, we know right away there will be  
20 issues of validity, of the appropriateness of this test for  
21 subpopulations, disabled students, things like that. These  
22 are all things that need to be researched on an ongoing basis.

23 And as issues come up, we'll continue to look at those.

24 We'll have a three-year assessment cycle. If I  
25 can find my overhead, I will show you what that looks like.

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1 We'll have a three-year assessment cycle. And it will look  
2 something like this. What that means is that it will take  
3 about three years to develop the test.

4 Now, let's start with the first year in which  
5 the test would be administered, in 1999. To get to that  
6 point, forms have to be field-tested in '98. Equating has to  
7 occur and a number of other things, linking. And items have  
8 to be developed in 1997.

9 Now, it is the case that in 1997, we're getting  
10 a late start because the award to develop the test will not be  
11 made until, let's say, August or so. So we are working on  
12 ways of getting some of the work done outside of that award.  
13 And as that develops, we'll let you know what happens there.

14 But once we get past 1997, this will become a  
15 routine activity. It will be built into and covered by  
16 contractors. And I think things will go fine.

17 So in 1999, to get to there, we have to go  
18 through three years of development. And also in 1999, we'll  
19 be conducting three assessments. We'll be administering the  
20 1999 assessment, field-testing the year 2000, and developing  
21 items and piloting the year 2001.

22 So we'll get on this assessment cycle. It will  
23 become more routine. And things will be fine, I think, once  
24 we get past this initial year. And we have some pretty good  
25 ideas about how to get past that as well.

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1           One important ingredient of the design of this  
2 test is that the administration, the scoring, the analysis,  
3 and reporting are the responsibility of not the federal  
4 government but of the group that administers the test.

5           What we're considering doing is to create a  
6 licensing panel, which I'll mention in just a moment in more  
7 depth. And this panel or whatever this entity turns out to be  
8 will be responsible for providing, either certifying or  
9 licensing, let's say, a school district or state or maybe a  
10 test publisher or some other testing entity to administer this  
11 test.

12           In order to get that license or to get that  
13 certification, -- let's say you're a school district and you  
14 want to administer the test -- you need to go to the licensing  
15 panel. You need to say, "Okay. I want to participate in the  
16 1999 assessment."

17           I might be able to do something like administer  
18 it. And I can demonstrate to you that I can train the  
19 administrators and I can maintain the security and that sort  
20 of thing that needs to be maintained. But maybe I can't score  
21 it or maybe I can't produce the reports.

22           Well, if you as a school district can't do that  
23 or a state, there will be either licensed scoring companies or  
24 if there might be a company that you would like to use that's  
25 not part of that licensing agreement and you can convince the

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1 board or the panel that this is possible, then you can use  
2 that. You then come back with a complete package. This  
3 licensing group says, "Okay. You're okay to give this test."

4 So the administration will be carried out by  
5 some sort of certified test administrator. There will be a  
6 random sample of administrations and scorings that will be  
7 monitored.

8 Now, it's important to note that in this  
9 monitoring, the goal here is not really to guarantee that  
10 every single school follows the procedures. What this  
11 monitoring is for is for the system, to see if it's working.

12 So that we're not going to have monitors in  
13 every school. There will be a minimum number of monitors  
14 monitoring that will help guarantee to the public and the  
15 government that the system is working fine and everything is  
16 going as it should or that changes need to be made.

17 What level of monitoring and what the details of  
18 this will be still have to be worked out, of course. And as  
19 we get the advisory panels on board, this will be worked out.

20 But at this point, I think we should imagine that there will  
21 be some level of monitoring which will help guarantee that we  
22 have a level playing field and that things are going as  
23 planned.

24 This will not be anything like we do in NAEP,  
25 where we have 25 percent of the schools monitored. This is

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1 not going to be that kind of level of monitoring.

2 During the first year of administration and  
3 possibly in subsequent years depending on the Congress and the  
4 administration, there will be funding to reimburse the cost of  
5 administering the test. So if you're a school district, at  
6 least in 1999, you will get reimbursed for their cost of  
7 administering the test.

8 If a decision to made to continue that in future  
9 years, then that will be the case, but, at least the first  
10 year, we are committing ourselves to providing the funding to  
11 help you get started to administer the test.

12 The administration of the test will be  
13 consistent with all civil rights law and the IDEA and other  
14 federal laws as well. And, believe me, we have a lot of legal  
15 advice on this. At lots of the meetings we have at the  
16 Department, we have a lot of lawyers show up. And you can  
17 never have too many lawyers. And so we have -- and the --  
18 (Tape ends in mid-sentence.)

19 (End of Tape 1, Side 1.)

20 (Beginning of Tape 1, Side 2.)

21 DR. PHILLIPS: (Tape begins in mid-sentence.)  
22 -- then go out on the street. And even though this says  
23 September an award, we're trying to get the award actually a  
24 month earlier. And what we're doing, what we're going to be  
25 doing, is we don't want to give the bidders less time. We

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1 want to give ourselves less time to review it.

2 What we had before was the situation where the  
3 bidders would be given a month and a half to two months. And  
4 then we would take two months to review it.

5 So we want to try to cut out that, still give it  
6 a good review, but we don't want it sitting on someone's desk  
7 for a couple of weeks. So these are some additional time  
8 lines here.

9 Let me show you one other thing if I can find it  
10 here. Well, you have a copy of the Web site. This is the  
11 address. And what happens is this is the address that will  
12 take you directly to the national test. It is a part of the  
13 Department of Education's Web site. And from that, you can  
14 move around to other places.

15 What we want to do with this Web site, -- it's a  
16 very important aspect of this whole thing -- not only will it  
17 be a place where everything that's publicly available will be  
18 there that you can get access to. It will also be a place  
19 where we can archive what we're doing. And so it's always at  
20 least one place we can always go and see what is current on  
21 that day.

22 Right now everything that we have done is on  
23 that Web site, including the minutes of this meeting or the  
24 transcript of this meeting. We decided, by the way, not to do  
25 summaries of meetings because different people have different

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1 views as to what happened in that meeting. What we put is the  
2 exact transcript of what happened in that meeting. And we'll  
3 continue to do this.

4 This is also where we will notify the public and  
5 others about announcements and RFPs and future public  
6 meetings. Of course, we'll also do this to the press as well,  
7 but there will also be the Web site as an important  
8 dissemination tool.

9 I think that's it for an overall summary. So  
10 thanks.

11 CHAIRMAN SMITH: One interesting thing about the  
12 Web site is that you can look at the transcripts of meetings  
13 over time. And, in fact, this description of Gary's has  
14 changed. We have learned from these meetings, and we have  
15 modified some of the specifications as we have gone along.

16 A couple of things that I didn't hear Gary  
17 emphasize, at least. One is that the test will be released  
18 every year. As soon as we give this test -- not we give it  
19 but the test publishers and the states and so on give it and  
20 that window is finished in schools, let's say, May 1st is the  
21 last date that schools around the country give these kinds of  
22 assessments, in the spring, we're going to put that test out  
23 onto a Web site with the items, with scoring keys with some  
24 rationale for the different items about what's trying to be  
25 measured in these cases, with other examples of materials that

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1 relate to the particular thing you're trying to measure.

2 So we're going to use the test, in effect, as a  
3 scaffold for putting a lot of other things around so the  
4 people can look at it. Teachers can look at it. Parents can  
5 look at it. Press can look at it, begin to think about it and  
6 understand. The whole process of testing will be better.

7 A point that Gary ran through really quickly,  
8 breakdown is 80/20 in terms of constructive, 20 percent  
9 constructive response, 80 percent multiple choice. That turns  
10 out 50/50 in terms of time in that 90 minutes. So it will be  
11 about 45 minutes of multiple choice and 45 minutes of  
12 constructive response items.

13 Okay. Let's just open it up to questions. Eva  
14 Baker? You have to actually come to the mike.

15 DR. PHILLIPS: You need to come to the mike.

16 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Your words will be saved for  
17 posterity.

18 MS. BAKER: Have you firmly decided that it's  
19 spring testing and not fall testing?

20 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes. Do you have an argument  
21 it should be fall testing? Part of this NAEP is spring  
22 testing. To begin to equate it to NAEP, you need the timing  
23 roughly right.

24 DR. PHILLIPS: One issue there with the spring  
25 testing is we would like to get the report out during that

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1 school year.

2 CHAIRMAN SMITH: That's true.

3 DR. PHILLIPS: So we started thinking about  
4 doing this in April or May. It was real clear that was too  
5 ambitious. So we're thinking about March as the month.

6 There are many issues. I don't think you should  
7 consider this cast in stone. The testing window is one of  
8 these things that has to get discussed more. And, of course,  
9 that will happen.

10 Another big issue is not just which week or  
11 which month but also how wide is the window. The wider the  
12 window, the better it is operationally and gives you  
13 flexibility, but the more you risk in security. And we do  
14 have to take into account security as an issue here. So that  
15 means you narrow the window, but that has to be discussed and  
16 decided.

17 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay. Ed, just identify  
18 yourself.

19 MR. HARTEL: Edward Hartel, Stanford University.

20 The last of your advisory committees that were  
21 listed on your slide was evaluation. I'm just asking whether  
22 inasmuch as this explicit expectations for the consequences of  
23 this testing program are part of the rationale for putting the  
24 test in place, if the evaluation is also going to look at  
25 whether those consequences are obtained and look

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1 comprehensively at that issue as part of the validation of the  
2 test.

3 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Is that a question or a  
4 recommendation? I mean, yes would be the answer.

5 MR. HARTEL: It's a request for some  
6 reassurance. I'd like to have some statement that that is, in  
7 fact, part of the intent.

8 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Oh. Well, that would be part  
9 of the intent that we try to understand, obviously understand,  
10 and evaluate not only how the test was used but in the  
11 circumstances, under the circumstances in which it was used.

12 The issue here on the use -- again, Gary said  
13 this clearly but, again, he went over a lot of material  
14 quickly -- this test will have to meet the same kinds of  
15 criteria as any other test to be used in a certain way.

16 If it's used for high stakes purposes; for  
17 example, under ROCR interpretations, students have to be  
18 prepared for those high stakes purposes. So they have to have  
19 been prepared on the material that will be covered by that  
20 test in order for that to be valid for a high stakes-like  
21 promotion or graduation or anything else, et cetera, for all  
22 other purposes that it might be used to meet.

23 I gather that the new standards are going to  
24 address those purposes, that kind of issue, in a lot more  
25 detail than the old standards did. Is that right, Eva? Would

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1 you say that? Okay. Ed? Okay.

2 I mean, what we'll try to do is that this test  
3 has to meet the same kinds of criteria as any other test.  
4 That means it's going to have to meet the criteria on the new  
5 standards.

6 MR. HARTEL: New standards are in process.

7 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Right.

8 MR. HARTEL: I hope that they're -- I think that  
9 they will certainly contain material which will be relevant to  
10 the purposes described.

11 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Right, right. Good. I don't  
12 think any of us imagine that this test is going to be used for  
13 any high stakes purposes in the first year and certainly not  
14 in the first year and perhaps in the first two or three years.  
15 There just won't be time to prepare students to the point  
16 where you can legitimately say that they have been prepared to  
17 take this assessment.

18 Yes?

19 MS. ROBERTS: I'm Heather Roberts, Testing and  
20 Assessment Officer for the American Psychological Association.

21 I attended the hearings that you and Secretary  
22 Riley testified at in front of the Education and Workforce  
23 Committee. I know there was some hard questioning and quite a  
24 lot of debate there.

25 I was wondering how critical Congressional

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1 support for the national test will be and how a lack of  
2 support, if it occurs, will affect future OERI appropriations.

3 CHAIRMAN SMITH: I think that will work itself  
4 out over time, actually. I was surprised at the lack of tough  
5 questions. There are all sorts of tough questions that the  
6 Congress folks could have asked that they didn't ask.

7 And I think that's, by and large, because many  
8 of them believe that there should be something like this, that  
9 there should be this stimulus, that we should be mobilizing  
10 the country around these issues. Clearly they want to be a  
11 part of it. I mean, that's was in significant part what their  
12 questions were directed to and trying to make them more a part  
13 of it.

14 They just sent us a list of 29 details  
15 questions, too. We answered those questions. We sent it back  
16 to them. We'll be talking in more detail with the  
17 Congressional staff and with the principals after the recess  
18 is over.

19 MS. ROBERTS: One follow-up. Gary had mentioned  
20 or at least had alluded to the fact that the first year would  
21 certainly be funded through OERI appropriations and that  
22 depending upon Congressional support in the future. So some  
23 of that is related, then, that just depending upon item lines  
24 that --

25 CHAIRMAN SMITH: No question about it. We're

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1 going to have to ask for an -- you don't have to ask for an  
2 appropriation right now. We can cover the fund for the  
3 improvement of education for the development part, but we  
4 cannot cover -- under that fund and without a new  
5 appropriation, we cannot cover the administration of the test.

6 So we're going to have to ask for that.

7 It's going to be in the 1999 budget right up  
8 front, and they'll be able to deal with it.

9 MR. CLINE: Steve Cline, Rand.

10 This seems to be a field of dreams kind of  
11 proposal, where if we build it, they will come kind of  
12 testing. Why do you think that school districts or states  
13 will buy into it given all of the other testing? You talk  
14 about testing window, what's going on right now in schools.  
15 Why do you think that they will drop what they're doing now or  
16 add this to what they're already doing?

17 CHAIRMAN SMITH: I think that's a good question.

18 I think the answer to it really has to do with a kind of a  
19 yearning to put a symbol out there not just by the President  
20 but by governors and by chief state school officers and  
21 others, some way of mobilizing people and energy around the  
22 improvement of the quality of education. I think that's  
23 really the motivator for this.

24 Among some folks, some politicians, it may turn  
25 out that because the state next door did it, that they feel as

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1       though they have to do it because they're being shamed to by  
2       the local newspapers or whatever.

3               But I think in most instances it's going to be  
4       people who see some promise and that through this they can  
5       mobilize more resources and improve the quality of education  
6       in their state.

7               So it's an aspiration that is noble, rather than  
8       an aspiration which is solely political.

9               MS. RIVERA: I'd like to ask a question about --  
10       I'm Charlene Rivera. I am at George Washington University and  
11       director of one of the comprehensive centers.

12              I guess I would like to ask what consideration  
13       has been given to the inclusion of limited English-proficient  
14       students, particularly at the fourth grade level, if the test  
15       is to be in English only, reading.

16              CHAIRMAN SMITH: We're still working through  
17       some of these issues, but there's a core issue on the fourth  
18       grade reading in that it is a fourth grade reading test of  
19       English, not a fourth grade reading test. So that begins to  
20       limit it down. We won't have a Spanish version of it.

21              The question then becomes: When do limited  
22       English-proficient kids take the test? Under what conditions?  
23       How long have they had to be in classes where they have taken  
24       English? Right now we're talking about three years.

25              This is an issue that a number of different

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1 panels have worked on. There's a recent one that Kenji Akuta  
2 (Phonetic.) chaired and the National Academy of Sciences. I  
3 believe they ended up with a recommendation of three years.  
4 And other groups have done the same thing. So that's where  
5 we'll probably end up as a recommendation.

6 If the child hasn't had three years of English,  
7 they wouldn't have to take the test.

8 MS. RIVERA: But what will be done in  
9 preparation to ensure that there is some kind of forward  
10 thinking about the types of items that are included in the  
11 test to ensure that there is the bridge built for limited  
12 English-proficient children to be included because, even after  
13 three years, there's no guarantee that they're going to be at  
14 the same level as monolingual children?

15 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Right. And that will be one of  
16 the issues that the test developer has to address and that the  
17 advisory panels presumably will address and so on.

18 MR. PRESSLEY: Hi. I'm Mike Presseley from SINY  
19 in Albany.

20 I keep careful track of all the questions that  
21 are posed to me and assertions that are made. I've heard an  
22 assertion repeatedly in the last six months, including you go  
23 to the black school board members in Riverside, California. I  
24 just heard it from one of the administrators of the largest,  
25 most prestigious school districts in New York State. I heard

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1 it from first grade teachers in Madison, Wisconsin.

2 The assertion is that, that, in fact, the  
3 national standards tests are succeeding in leveraging the  
4 American curriculum in ways that all of these groups feel are  
5 not consistent with excellence, that it's a leveraging in a  
6 lowest common denominator fashion.

7 So I think, first of all, that that needs to be  
8 evaluated, but the larger question is: Do you have any plans,  
9 either in conjunction with this assessment or the NAEPs, to  
10 actually assess in a fine grain fashion exactly what effects  
11 on the American curriculum these various testing efforts are  
12 having?

13 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Mike, I'm not sure what you  
14 mean. Which national tests of national standards?

15 MR. PRESSLEY: Well, the last assertion I heard  
16 over lunch from one of the administrators in a very large  
17 school district was specifically a fear with respect to the  
18 tests that we were just briefed on. The others are --

19 CHAIRMAN SMITH: That test doesn't exist.

20 MR. PRESSLEY: This is a fear. This is a fear.

21 CHAIRMAN SMITH: How about the other instances  
22 that you mentioned?

23 MR. PRESSLEY: It varies from whether you are  
24 talking about the NAEP to the TOSS. It's the generic type of  
25 test, the high stakes test, that this seems to be like.

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1 CHAIRMAN SMITH: NAEP isn't a high stakes test.  
2 It's not taken by 99 percent of the kids in the country.  
3 This may be a valid point. It's just I don't understand it.

4 MR. PRESSLEY: I heard you say earlier that you  
5 want to leverage the curriculum. You said that.

6 CHAIRMAN SMITH: I want to. Exactly.  
7 Absolutely.

8 MR. PRESSLEY: And I'm hearing --

9 CHAIRMAN SMITH: I want to leverage the  
10 curriculum and do it in a manner that's successful.

11 MR. PRESSLEY: -- be successful in leveraging  
12 the curriculum.

13 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Sure. And I want to give every  
14 kid a chance to be able to learn that kind of material.

15 MR. PRESSLEY: In your various tests, are you  
16 assessing the changes that are --

17 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay. We will on this test,  
18 but on the other tests, it's a point -- I don't know whether  
19 the NAEP has had an evaluation of --

20 DR. PHILLIPS: Why don't you let me --

21 MR. PRESSLEY: Could you tell us how you're  
22 going to do that?

23 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Well, I don't know yet. We're  
24 looking for advice on all sorts of things like that.

25 MR. PRESSLEY: Okay.

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1 CHAIRMAN SMITH: And we talked a lot about it.  
2 There will be information about this as we bring it up. But  
3 right now we're two months into this thing. As Gary said,  
4 that is on the agenda.

5 MR. PRESSLEY: Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN SMITH: And it is an important part of  
7 the agenda.

8 MR. PRESSLEY: Yes. Well, I think that you  
9 should bear in mind the number of different constituencies  
10 that are dissatisfied with the leveraging. It's pretty  
11 striking to me. So I think this is a point that needs some  
12 hard reflection.

13 DR. PHILLIPS: May I follow up on that for just  
14 one moment?

15 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Sure.

16 DR. PHILLIPS: As I mentioned before, in  
17 addition to there being an overall evaluation associated with,  
18 which I'm sure will look at this issue, part of the research  
19 agenda as well would be to look at the consequential validity  
20 of this test. I mean, that is obviously going to be one of  
21 the first things that that research agenda will look at.

22 And also, again, by the licensing panel, there  
23 may be guidelines as to what the appropriate uses are, again  
24 within limits for this test the first time out.

25 Now, what uses can be made of the test in the

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1 future have to be dealt with by this licensing panel, but it  
2 is going to be their responsibility to work these things out  
3 and to monitor that.

4 And there are a variety of ways this could be  
5 done. I'm not saying that this is the way it will be done,  
6 but one possibility could be that when a district uses a test,  
7 let's say, for a high stake purpose or they want to use it for  
8 a high stakes purpose, before they do that, data would need to  
9 be collected that indicates that this is an appropriate use of  
10 that test. And this could be reviewed and signed off on by  
11 this licensing group.

12 But just in general, the answer to your question  
13 is consequential validity is sort of one of the highest  
14 issues. And it's way up there on the list of things that we  
15 have to deal with.

16 MR. MYERBERG: Yes. I'm Jim Myerberg. I'm with  
17 Montgomery County Public Schools. And I'm also with the  
18 National Association of Test Directors, which is a group of  
19 LAC test directors.

20 I've got two questions. The first one is kind  
21 of a follow-up one that was brought up a couple of minutes  
22 ago. The gentleman asked about how you're going to motivate  
23 states and districts to participate. My question is:  
24 Especially at the eighth grade level, how are you going to  
25 motivate the kids to participate?

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1 I realize this is just getting started. If you  
2 don't have an answer for that yet, I'd like to ask that you  
3 certainly consider it because in a test that, quote, "doesn't  
4 count for the kids," I think that's a problem, especially at  
5 eighth grade.

6 CHAIRMAN SMITH: I agree it's a problem. We  
7 don't have an answer to that right now. Part of the  
8 motivation I believe will come from the setting. If this  
9 thing works, if we get in the sense that it works in the sense  
10 that 30 states, let's say, adopt this test, -- and I expect 30  
11 states will and then maybe scattered districts throughout the  
12 country and the other 20 states or so -- by the Spring of  
13 1999, there's going to be a lot of focused attention on this  
14 particular assessment.

15 In itself, that will have some of distorting  
16 effect which we need to try to understand, but it will also  
17 focus an awful lot of parents' attention and kids' attention  
18 on a zero stakes test in a way that it hasn't happened in the  
19 past.

20 I mean, I know the problem in a panel study,  
21 that problem with respect to NAEP. I think it's a fairly  
22 serious panel. There are questions, particularly at the  
23 twelfth grade. The eighth grade I guess it's less so, and  
24 there are still a lot of kids who could blow it off.

25 On the other hand, it's a little bit different

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1 kind of test in the sense that there will be more attention  
2 paid to it. Parents will know more about what's going on.  
3 There will have been more concern about it. So our hope is  
4 that kids will be motivated to take it, but I think your issue  
5 is a very good issue.

6 Fourth graders, I guess the general feeling  
7 among folks who study this, the fourth graders have their own  
8 internal motivation to take it. And they haven't gotten jaded  
9 yet.

10 MR. MYERBERG: The other one I guess is a  
11 clarification for Gary. You said something before about that  
12 you all want to report the results before the end of the  
13 school year. Does that include individual student results to  
14 the students and parents?

15 DR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

16 CHAIRMAN SMITH: We wouldn't report them, of  
17 course.

18 DR. PHILLIPS: The local school district would  
19 state or test publisher --

20 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Or the test publisher would  
21 report them.

22 DR. PHILLIPS: -- would report them.

23 MR. MYERBERG: So they would be back to the  
24 locals in time to get them to the parents?

25 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes. That's the goal, to get

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1 those test results back before the kid goes on to the next  
2 grade. Obviously in a setting like a junior high school or a  
3 middle school where the kids goes to another school after  
4 eighth grade, you'd like to get those things back so there  
5 could be some then discussion with the parent about them so  
6 they'd have some feedback role at least.

7 MR. MYERBERG: That would be good if you could  
8 do it.

9 MR. POPHAM: I'm Jim Popham at UCLA. I am a  
10 recovering test developer.

11 (Laughter.)

12 MR. POPHAM: Those years of test development  
13 lead me to the question. Gary outlined a series of problems  
14 and issues, all of which have subproblems and subissues. But  
15 the big problem seems to me the major one stems from your  
16 aspiration that you outlined.

17 That is, you want these tests to be a stimulus  
18 for improved instruction across the nation. And to do that,  
19 you clearly have to create tests that are demanding, not  
20 trivial kinds of tests at all.

21 But you could in the process of creating  
22 demanding tests in the way you structure the tests create  
23 tests which are essentially impervious to instructional  
24 impact. That is, you could create tests on which you guys  
25 don't have a chance to win.

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1                   So that seems to me to be the major dilemma.  
2                   And I would either like a solution right now or perhaps you  
3                   could tell us about your thinking because that's a tough one.

4                   CHAIRMAN SMITH: Obviously we don't want a test  
5                   that no amount of instruction or effort will have influenced  
6                   the score. And, as Jim said, we do want a test that will  
7                   motivate instruction.

8                   It will be a little bit different than the test  
9                   which a lot of you envision as motivating instruction. It's  
10                  not going to be a test with great long responses and lots of  
11                  time for the kids to sit down and think through a problem or  
12                  to gain information over a period of two or three days, to  
13                  then try to put together a response to kind of a unique  
14                  problem about mathematics that is in a setting which motivates  
15                  them and so on.

16                  All of those are dreams which I think we all  
17                  have about how testing should be in the United States in the  
18                  long run. That won't be this kind of test. We've described  
19                  the kind of test it will be. It will be 90 minutes long. It  
20                  will be half multiple choice and half extended response in  
21                  terms of time.

22                  We've got to motivate it in another way. We've  
23                  got to motivate it through working with parents, letting  
24                  parents know the kinds of materials that kids could learn how  
25                  to read or read independently themselves or should be able to

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1 read independently at different grade levels.

2 We've got to motivate it by putting out good  
3 information about programs that work to bring kids up to speed  
4 if they aren't at a certain point prior to eighth grade or  
5 prior to fourth grade. We've got to motivate it by better  
6 teacher training. We've got to motivate it through all of  
7 those ways that I started to touch upon before.

8 And that's not going to be easy. It's a  
9 different cut at the kinds of things, at using the test as a  
10 motivator than we thought about before. We haven't thought,  
11 as much at least, about the context in which the test is  
12 given. And that's what we're changing. We're not changing  
13 the design of the test so much to do the motivation. We're  
14 changing the context of it.

15 There are a lot of ways to do this. We talked a  
16 lot about the kinds of tests we're going to put out on the Web  
17 and that will be available to everybody. We hope to get one  
18 out there in 1998, a test of the sort that would be then used  
19 in 1999.

20 And we hope to have extra elaborative response  
21 items that teachers could use to work with kids to kind of at  
22 least get them in sort of the rhythm of understanding what the  
23 test was about and answering the kinds of questions that  
24 address the issues that the test is going to cover.

25 So we haven't got this one solved at all, Jim.

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1 And we need your help on it. We need a lot of other people's  
2 help on it. But I think there's an angle here that we haven't  
3 really tried to address in the past.

4 In this regard, the test itself becomes less  
5 important than the paraphernalia around it. It becomes more  
6 of a symbol than the end result. This is not the end result  
7 in any serious sense. What the end result is in my view is  
8 improved teaching, improved learning.

9 And the test will only be a minor reflection of  
10 that under any circumstances. But if we can create that kind  
11 of momentum in the classrooms, we've gone a long distance I  
12 think.

13 MR. PANDY: I'm T. H. Pandy with the California  
14 Education Department. I have two curiosity questions and then  
15 a motivational issue.

16 The question is: Will there be a cost to the  
17 student or to the parent? And also will this test be like on  
18 a single day, certain time, like the SAT, or will it be  
19 flexible that people can give it within a certain window?

20 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay. When you say "a cost,"  
21 do you mean a monetary cost?

22 MR. PANDY: No. A cost to the student to take  
23 the test.

24 DR. PHILLIPS: Will it cost the student money to  
25 take the test?

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1 MR. PANDY: Yes.

2 DR. PHILLIPS: No.

3 CHAIRMAN SMITH: No, it will not cost the  
4 student money to take the test. And in terms of the window,  
5 again, this is something that has to be worked out as part of  
6 the development of the test and the advisory structure. It's  
7 going to be a trade-off between providing flexibility within a  
8 larger window versus maintaining security with the smaller  
9 one. I don't have an answer to that but that's the general  
10 dynamic that needs to play out there.

11 MR. PANDY: And regarding the motivation, is  
12 there some thinking that they can get some kind of a diploma  
13 or some kind of a merit badge or something in order to -- it  
14 seems that the experience like in California with the state  
15 exam is that to give a diploma or a merit seal. And it's  
16 really a high-level exam, but it is a very good motivational  
17 score to help the kids to do well.

18 CHAIRMAN SMITH: This goes to the issue of the  
19 high stakes nature of the test. That is a determination that  
20 will be made by the local district or by the state, but it  
21 would also have to meet the kinds of criteria that we talked  
22 about before.

23 It's possible that down the line a state or a  
24 district might want to do that. I'm not sure that I recommend  
25 it on a test of this particular nature. You might want a

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1 longer, a little more complex assessment experience for the  
2 child to go through in order to get that kind of reward for  
3 it.

4 But that would be specifically up to the state  
5 and the district.

6 MR. WISE: Lorie Wise from Humro (Phonetic). My  
7 question is about reporting. I understand that a key part of  
8 this will be reporting individual results to the students and  
9 their parents. But I assume that there's the intention to  
10 aggregate up results and report larger units, such as the  
11 district or state by state.

12 Do you intend for there to be a federal role in  
13 trying to coordinate this or is this each state's going to  
14 design their own reporting system or can you say just a little  
15 bit more about what you think might happen with regard to  
16 reporting a more aggregated level?

17 CHAIRMAN SMITH: We're not going to take any  
18 role in it at all. I mean, we will let those aggregations  
19 happen at the state level. We presumably pulled together  
20 those reports. We'd love to see those reports and see what  
21 was happening, state or district level, if those reports get  
22 produced.

23 But these aren't going to be test scores that  
24 come back to the federal government because we ask for them.  
25 And we're certainly not going to gather them on an individual

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1 basis.

2 DR. PHILLIPS: But there may be some again broad  
3 guidelines or limits that the licensing panel would set on  
4 this. I don't know what those would be at this point.

5 For example, there may be some clearly  
6 inappropriate reporting strategies that we don't want to  
7 encourage. So within those limits, the sky is the limit in  
8 terms of local options.

9 MR. ALLINGTON: I'm Dick Allington from the  
10 University at Albany and a member of the board of the  
11 International Reading Association.

12 My question is just: Is it too late to think  
13 about doing fourth grade math and eighth grade reading?

14 (Laughter.)

15 DR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

16 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes, although we'd be glad to  
17 hear arguments for it. But it's too late right now, yes.

18 MR. ALLINGTON: I don't understand the rationale  
19 for it. I mean, if you look at the international comparisons,  
20 American kids are doing pretty well at fourth grade in  
21 reading; in fact, damn well. Math, on the other hand, they  
22 lag behind. And if you really want to leverage the  
23 curriculum, I would think that you would want to leverage the  
24 weak area and not the strong area.

25 By eighth grade, American kids in international

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1 comparisons have started to slide back towards the middle.  
2 And I would use the lever at eighth grade on reading and at  
3 fourth grade on math.

4 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Of course, the other side of  
5 that argument is that basically in the U.S. people stop  
6 teaching reading by the time students hit fourth grade and you  
7 don't have that kind of reading instruction going on. You've  
8 got other kinds of reading kids are expected to do.

9 And it may be that they're asked to do less in  
10 the U.S. And so that would pick up their scores because it's  
11 really reading for comprehension almost completely by the time  
12 you hit eighth grade.

13 We do do well in international comparisons in  
14 reading in fourth grade. And, yet, we have a wide variance.  
15 And we have a lot of kids in our country who don't do  
16 particularly well. If you take a look, for instance, at kids  
17 who are labeled as disabled, a good 5 of the 12 percent who  
18 are labeled as disabled in fifth grade are there because  
19 they're reading two grade levels behind in reading.

20 Now, two grade levels behind is a lousy measure  
21 in my view, but it is a measure that has taken on such meaning  
22 in the United States that these kids are given IAPs. They're  
23 given all sorts of other kinds of intensive interventions  
24 because they need to be brought up to speed.

25 I'd like to see that happen before they hit

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1 fourth grade. I'd like to see it happen in first grade and  
2 second grade and third grade. And that's in large part what  
3 we're trying to do. We're trying to get that kind of  
4 motivation going so that they will be.

5 MR. ALLINGTON: Well, as I said, it just seems  
6 like leveraging K-4 math is equally as important and perhaps  
7 more important than leveraging K-4 reading.

8 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Right.

9 MR. HONIG: Bill Honig from San Francisco State  
10 University.

11 I guess this is a plea to keep the -- I would  
12 disagree. I think fourth grade is an essential part for  
13 reading. And I think also we're kidding ourselves if we think  
14 that we're doing well in reading in the country. We have this  
15 diversity, as you mentioned.

16 You go into an inner city. You look in the  
17 fourth grade. And you ask us the basic question: What  
18 percentage of kids can read fourth grade stuff coming into  
19 fourth grade? It's shocking. It's a scandal. And that  
20 information is powerful.

21 I disagree with Michael Presseley. I agree with  
22 him on content. But we need a simply understood standard.  
23 And so I guess the plea or question is: Once you look at it,  
24 I would hope it focuses on: one, real world reading level so  
25 it's connected to what the kids can actually do, not an

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1 artifact of a test, but what percentage of the kids can handle  
2 the material we want them to handle.

3 And, secondly, I don't know if it's feasible  
4 technically, but when NAEP did a sample in '92, they found a  
5 large percentage of youngsters who just couldn't read swiftly  
6 enough. They weren't fluent enough to read. And so the speed  
7 of reading turned out to be important, too, comprehension but  
8 speed. And those two are what practically what the term is  
9 who is going to go on when the language gets harder in upper  
10 fourth and fifth grades. So if that can be built in and  
11 reported that way, I think it would be healthy.

12 And I disagree with that's going to drive the  
13 curriculum the wrong way. You set a standard of real world.  
14 You can handle the fifth grade material or fourth grade.  
15 That's what teachers are looking for. That's what parents  
16 understand. And that should drive the curriculum and to  
17 produce more kids who can actually do that.

18 CHAIRMAN SMITH: I think you're right, Bill.  
19 Actually, we need your help and other people's help to get  
20 examples of that real world material. And if we can have lots  
21 and lots and lots of that that can apply to different kids all  
22 over this country, we can really make very powerful use of it.  
23 Thanks.

24 MR. FIRESTONE: Bill Firestone from Rutgers.

25 You said earlier that the real objective here is

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1 not to do a test but to leverage up the learning of kids at  
2 these various levels. For that to happen, it seems to me the  
3 learning of teachers also is going to have to be leveraged up  
4 in an appropriate way.

5 And it's my experience that with tests like  
6 this, often the learning of teachers happens, but they don't  
7 learn to do the kind of instruction that would get to the kind  
8 of learning that you're looking for, I think.

9 So what I'm seeing here is an investment that is  
10 strictly in testing. Is there going to be a time when the  
11 federal government is going to be investing in other parts of  
12 the system to change that kind of understanding of how to  
13 teach for high-quality learning?

14 CHAIRMAN SMITH: You know, Bill, I don't think  
15 we need to invest in figuring out how to do it. I think we've  
16 got a heck of a lot of knowledge about how to do it. I think  
17 right now it takes will and some policy-making skills. And,  
18 of course, that's where you all come in, the folks who study  
19 the policy-makers and the folks who try to study the  
20 policy-making process.

21 MR. FIRESTONE: I'm not talking about --

22 CHAIRMAN SMITH: We need to be able to change  
23 the nature of professional development and pre-service  
24 students, for example, pre-service teachers. And we need to  
25 be able to change the nature of the professional development.

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1 I mean, right now we have professional  
2 development going on all the time as teachers move up a pay  
3 scale ladder. They go out, and they get a course. They get a  
4 course from Rutgers or from Stanford. Well, they don't get it  
5 from Stanford. That get it from UW-Madison or whatever. And  
6 it often has nothing to do with what they're teaching in those  
7 schools, in their own schools.

8 And, yet, we don't come together and say, "Look,  
9 if we want our kids to succeed really well, the kinds of  
10 professional development that teachers get and that they then  
11 get paid extra for should have something to do with the  
12 quality of their instruction in classrooms." We don't do it.

13 That's not something that we need to put out  
14 money to show people how to do. We can leverage through  
15 things like that 75 percent of the professional development  
16 money in this country.

17 MR. FIRESTONE: But my experience is if you put  
18 the test out, people won't necessarily convert the way they do  
19 all of these other things with some kind of help.

20 I'm just suggesting some investment in moving  
21 that area along with the investment in testing would help.

22 CHAIRMAN SMITH: I think we're going to make a  
23 lot of investment, both in some money but a lot of energy,  
24 into trying to change the decisions that states make.

25 MR. SCHAFFER: Bill Schafer, University of

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1 Maryland. This may be a related question.

2 When you release the test, do you also plan on  
3 releasing enough information so individuals can use the test  
4 and score the test and develop the same scores on new  
5 individuals that are reported?

6 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes. In fact, we've actually  
7 talked about having homeschool moms and dads use it on their  
8 kids if they want to, not as administered but pulling it right  
9 down off the Web with directions about the conditions under  
10 which it should be given, with scoring rubrics and so on so  
11 that this could be something that parents might want to take  
12 that test or a teacher might want to take the test to get a  
13 feel for the test for the next year when he or she is going to  
14 be either administering it or preparing kids for it.

15 It will have that kind of material there. It  
16 will have lots of other kinds of material. So it's really  
17 trying to embroider the concept, embroider the ideas that go  
18 around what the test is trying to measure and doing it in such  
19 a way that it itself is instructive and people can give  
20 feedback.

21 CHAIRMAN SMITH: George?

22 GEORGE: Mike, has there been attention given to  
23 the potential impact of this on especially state NAEP? I  
24 think of a state taking mathematics at Grade 8 in the year  
25 2000 and 4th grade reading in the year 2002. Isn't this going

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1 to put a tremendous burden on states and, therefore, quite an  
2 impact on state NAEP?

3 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Well, that's a good question.  
4 And since I wear two hats here, I spend a lot of time thinking  
5 about that. I think that there are issues here that are  
6 related to -- the NAEP/national test relationship is something  
7 that has to be I think thought about more and worked out. And  
8 it will evolve over time.

9 There are lots of connections that need to be  
10 looked at. One, for example, is the idea of a short form in  
11 NAEP versus this national test. Both are sort of short forms.

12 One is the short form in NAEP, and one is a test that's not  
13 NAEP but it's like NAEP.

14 I don't have an answer for that right now, but I  
15 know that the National Assessment Governing Board, the center,  
16 and the Department are thinking that through and working it  
17 through.

18 The national test in some ways I think may very  
19 well take the pressure off of NAEP to do exactly this thing.  
20 There has been a lot of pressure on NAEP in recent years to  
21 develop a short form to be used in this way. And what this I  
22 think does is it will continue to allow NAEP to do the things  
23 that it does well and this other mechanism will do the things  
24 that it's being designed to do well.

25 So those connections I don't have answers for,

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1 but obviously that has to be worked out.

2 MR. BROWN: Larry Brown, ETS.

3 The fact that you argue that the federal  
4 government will not be collecting individual data, that will  
5 be done by the states or local education authorities, doesn't  
6 that put a terrible burden on the evaluator in trying to  
7 determine whether, in fact, the test is working as expected?

8 And, as a result, do you expect that you'll ask  
9 states who agree to give the test to also agree to cooperate  
10 in evaluation activities?

11 CHAIRMAN SMITH: First of all, the evaluation  
12 entity is not in place at this point. So I don't know what  
13 the details are. But obviously we will want to have them to  
14 have access to as much information as possible. And when they  
15 do an evaluation, we will want it to be credible.

16 But I don't know what kind of access it would  
17 have to data. That rule still needs to be worked out. Now,  
18 they certainly would have access to the data that the  
19 government is collecting through the linking and the NORMing  
20 and the equating and all that sort of thing. And they would  
21 have access to the information on the monitoring that would be  
22 handled through the licensing organization.

23 And then the relationship, how much information  
24 they get from states I think is one of those issues that still  
25 needs to be worked out. But the important thing about the

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1 evaluation is that when they do an evaluation of the  
2 assessment and it becomes a public document, we want it to be  
3 as credible as possible and no doubts that this is an  
4 independent, objective evaluation.

5 PARTICIPANT: I'll just -- (Tape ends in  
6 mid-sentence.)

7 (End of Tape 1, Side 2.)

8 (Beginning of Tape 2, Side 1.)

9 CHAIRMAN SMITH: (Tape begins in mid-sentence.)  
10 -- RFP is on the Web page. And a lot of you I know could  
11 contribute thoughtful reactions to the content of that. And  
12 we very much want those thoughtful reactions and any other  
13 reactions.

14 I mean, if you have an idea, Henry has an idea  
15 about how we should be thinking about the evaluation, for  
16 example, and he wants to share it with us, you just send that  
17 into the same address or e-mail it to one of the two of us.  
18 Now is the time to really begin to try to influence these  
19 kinds of activities.

20 And we are influenceable. I mean, we've changed  
21 this design half a dozen times over the last month or so.

22 Does anybody else have any questions?

23 (No response.)

24 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you very much.

25 (Applause.)

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1 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Oh, wait. Wait. One more.

2 MR. LAREAL (Phonetic.): My name is Hessel  
3 Lareal. I'm a graduate student at Stanford.

4 My question was about, well, thinking about the  
5 tremendous challenges that some teachers experience in school  
6 districts versus others. My experience was in Los Angeles.  
7 And I experienced a tremendous amount of difficulty teaching  
8 mathematics.

9 I'm just afraid that this test will be just yet  
10 another verification about things that we already know, that  
11 some schools are doing a good job and others aren't.

12 In some schools, our kids come to school very  
13 ready to read. And in others, teachers have a tremendous  
14 challenge trying to actually teach the students who read;  
15 whereas, in the other schools, the kids come to school ready  
16 to read. Some are already reading.

17 So my question is: What thought has been given  
18 to providing resources to schools, resources to teachers? I'm  
19 sort of building on what the gentleman from Rutgers talked  
20 about regarding teacher preparation.

21 I think, in addition to teacher preparation,  
22 teachers need additional resources depending on the districts  
23 they work in. In a tough district, where there are many  
24 challenges, a teacher needs additional time, et cetera.

25 So what sort of thought has been given to sort

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1 of following up this testing with some sort of resources to  
2 equalize opportunities for our students?

3 CHAIRMAN SMITH: I think that's a terrific  
4 question. It's really the question which bothers me most  
5 about any of these efforts that we've made. We spent 30 years  
6 now tolerating gross inequities in this country in terms of  
7 the capacity of schools in the inner cities and the poor rural  
8 areas compared to the capacity of schools in suburbs.

9 Now, we have tolerated the gross inequities in  
10 the nature of the curriculum, in the preparation of the  
11 teachers, on the amount of time the teachers have often, and  
12 the size of the classes.

13 We don't have an answer to your question. We  
14 don't have a pat answer to it at all. I mean, we have been  
15 fighting for more resources in Title I and other things. But  
16 fundamental dollars have to come. And the fundamental  
17 commitment I believe has to come from states and from local  
18 governments. We can put in as much as we can. It would still  
19 make only a tiny, little dent in those settings.

20 The idea here, however, is to highlight those  
21 settings time after time after time and not just have the  
22 mayor highlight them or the superintendent but the President  
23 of the United States highlight them and the First Lady and the  
24 Vice President and the Secretary and to do it over and over  
25 and over and to provide the kinds of advice about what sorts

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1 of information, what sorts of strategies, what sorts of  
2 interventions might make a difference in L.A., in New York  
3 City, in Chicago, in other places.

4 So it's to motivate the use of the knowledge  
5 that we've got out there. We know an awful lot about how to  
6 improve those settings. We're just not doing it. And we've  
7 got to have some way, some way of beginning to leverage the  
8 kind of change that we all know can happen and to give the  
9 kids out there the kinds of opportunities that they haven't  
10 had for the last 30 years.

11 So I think that's really the critical question.

12 That's what this thing is all about at some point, to try to  
13 make those differences real to people so that they take some  
14 action to change them.

15 Thank you very much.

16 (Applause.)

17 (Whereupon, the foregoing matter was concluded.)  
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